

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE UPDATE

June 27, 2002

The CWD National Plan has been released. This plan was developed by numerous federal and state biologist in a four week time period in response to the Congressional hearing held in mid-May. This plan calls for the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the U. S. Department of Interior to assist the states in addressing the CWD problem. A funding package to provide much needed funding assistance to the states will be going to Congress this week also.

A correction to the New Mexico CWD deer story. The animal was collected by White Sands Missile Range game wardens on May 28, 2002 after it was observed exhibiting the clinical signs of CWD. It was not harvested during the 2001 firearms season as previously reported.

Although not a CWD report, the Wisconsin Bureau of Animal Health has announced that an elk from a captive facility approximately 75 miles north of Milwaukee has tested positive for bovine tuberculosis. This is not near the CWD area nor is it close to their border with Michigan, who has been confirmed TB in free-ranging deer and elk for a number of years.

The Natural Resources Board of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources approved a major plan to eradicate CWD withing that state. On a 6-1 vote, the board approved a two year ban on baiting and feeding, established a goal of a 50% reduction in deer populations in a zone around the CWD location and approved a proposal to eradicate all deer in a smaller zone where CWD was found. Various tools for achieving this were approved, including nontransferable landowner permits, extended deer seasons and increased bag limits.

Earlier this spring, the Colorado Division of Wildlife and USDA-APHIS depopulated all but two captive elk ranches in the Colorado endemic area. These facilities were depopulated on a voluntary basis and the owner paid for their animals. Now, one of the two facilities that did not depopulate has confirmed CWD in their herd of 50 elk. USDA lawyers are researching the legal ramifications of the owner previously refusing to depopulate with indemnification and what legal authority the state and feds have for action at this facility.

.